

# PIT

**PISMIKE.** *n. f.* [myna, Sax. *pisimere*, Dutch.] An ant; an emmet.

His cloaths, as atoms might prevail,  
Might fit a *pisimere* or a whale. *Prior.*

Prejudicial to fruit are *pisimere*, caterpillars and mice. *Mort.*  
**TO PISS.** *v. n.* [*pisser*, Fr. *pisser*, Dutch.] To make water.

I charge the *pisling* conduit run nothing but claret. *Shakefp.*  
One als *pisles*, the rest *pis* for company. *L'Estrange.*

Once possels'd of what with care you save,  
The wanton boys would *pis* upon your grave. *Dryden.*

**PISS.** *n. f.* [from the verb.] Urine; animal water.  
My spleen is at the little rogues, it would vex one more to  
be knock'd on the head with a *pis*-pot than a thunder  
bolt. *Pope to Swift.*

**PISSABED.** *n. f.* A yellow flower growing in the grass.  
**PISSBURN.** *adj.* Stained with urine.

**PISTA'CHIO.** *n. f.* [*pistache*, Fr. *pistachi*, Italian; *pistachia*,  
Latin.]

The *pistachio* is a dry fruit of an oblong figure, pointed at  
both ends about half an inch in length, and a third of an inch  
in thickness: it has a double shell, the exterior one mem-  
branaceous and thin, and the inner hard, tough and woody:  
the kernel is of a green colour and a soft and unctuous sub-  
stance, much like the pulp of an almond, of a pleasant taste:  
*pistachio* were known to the ancients, and the Arabians call  
them *pestich* and *sestich*, and we sometimes *spitch* nuts. *Hill.*

*Pistachio*, so they be good, and not musty, joined with al-  
monds, are an excellent nourisher. *Bacon's Nat. Hist.*

**PISTE.** *n. f.* [French.] The track or tread a horseman makes  
upon the ground he goes over.

**PISTILLATION.** *n. f.* [*pistillum*, Lat.] The act of pounding in  
a mortar.

The best diamonds we have are comminable, and so far  
from breaking hammers, that they submit unto *pistillation*,  
and resist not an ordinary pebble. *Brown's Vulgar Errors.*

**PISTOL.** *n. f.* [*pistole*, Fr.] A small handgun.  
Three watch the door with *pistols*, that none should issue  
out. *Shakespeare's Merry Wives of Windsor.*

The whole body of the horie passed within *pistol*-shot of  
the cottage. *Clarendon, b. viii.*

Quicksilver discharged from a *pistol* will hardly pierce  
through a parchment. *Brown's Vulgar Errors.*

A woman had a tubercle in the great canthus of the eye, of  
the bigness of a *pistol*-bullet. *Wiseeman's Surgery.*

**TO PISTOL.** *v. a.* [*pistoler*, Fr.] To shoot with a pistol.

**PISTOLE.** *n. f.* [*pistole*, Fr.] A coin of many countries and  
many degrees of value.

I shall disburden him of many hundred *pistoles*, to make  
him lighter for the journey. *Dryden's Spanish Fryar.*

**PISTOLET.** *n. f.* [diminutive of *pistole*.] A little pistol.

Those unlickt bear-whelps, unlik'd *pistoles*  
That, more than cannon-shot, avails or lets. *Donne.*

**PISTON.** *n. f.* [*piston*, Fr.] The movable part in several ma-  
chines; as in pumps and syringes, whereby the suction or at-  
traction is caused; an embolus.

**PIT.** *n. f.* [Saxon.]

1. A hole in the ground.

Get you gone,  
And from the *pit* of Acheron  
Meet me i' th' morning. *Shakefp. Macbeth.*

Tumble me into some loathsome *pit*,  
Where never man's eye may behold my body. *Shakefp.*

Our enemies have beat us to the *pit*;  
It is more worthy to leap in ourselves,  
Than tarry 'till they push us. *Shakefp. Julius Caesar.*

*Pits* upon the sea-shore turn into fresh water, by percola-  
tion of the salt through the sand; but in some places of Africa,  
the water in such *pits* will become brackish again. *Bacon.*

2. Abyss; profundity.

Into what *pit* thou see'st  
From what height fallen. *Milton.*

3. The grave.

O Lord, think no scorn of me, lest I become like them  
that go down into the *pit*. *Psalms xxviii. 1.*

4. The area on which cocks fight; whence the phrase, to fly  
the *pit*.

Make him glad, at least, to quit  
His victory, and fly the *pit*. *Hudibras.*

They managed the dispute as fiercely, as two game-cocks  
in the *pit*. *Locke on Education.*

5. The middle part of the theatre.

Let Cully, Cockwood, Fopling charm the *pit*,  
And in their folly shew the writers wit. *Dryden.*

Now luck for us, and a kind hearty *pit*;  
For he who pleases, never fails of wit. *Dryden.*

6. [*Pis*, old Fr. from *pelus*, Lat.] Any hollow of the  
body: as, the *pit* of the stomach; the arm *pit*.

7. A dint made by the finger.

**TO PIT.** *v. a.* To sink in hollows.

An anasarca, a species of dropsy, is characterised by the  
shining and softness of the skin, which gives way to the least  
impression, and remains *pitted* for some time. *Sharp.*

**PITAPAT.** *n. f.* [probably from *pas a pas*, or *patte patte*, Fr.]

# PIT

1. A flutter; a palpitation.

A lion meets him, and the fox's heart went *pitapat*. *L'Estr.*

2. A light quick step.

Now I hear the *pitapat* of a pretty foot through the dark  
alley: no, 'tis the son of a mare that's broken loose, and  
munching upon the melons. *Dryden's Don Sebastian.*

**PITCH.** *n. f.* [pic, Sax. *pix*, Lat.] The resin of the pine ex-  
tracted by fire and inspissated.

They that touch *pitch* will be defiled. *Proverbs.*

Of air and water mixed together, and consumed with fire,  
Is made a black colour; as in charcoal, oil, *pitch* and  
links. *Peacham on Drawing.*

A vessel smeard round with *pitch*.

3. [From *piets*, Fr. *Skinner*.] Any degree of elevation or  
height.

Lovely concord and most sacred peace  
Doth nourish virtue, and fast friendship breeds,  
Weak the makes strong, and strong things does increase,  
Till it the *pitch* of highest praise exceeds. *Fairy Queen.*

How high a *pitch* his resolution soars.  
Arm thy heart, and fill thy thoughts  
To mount aloft with thy imperial mistress,  
And mount her *pitch*. *Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus.*

Between two hawks, which flies the higher *pitch*,  
I have, perhaps, some shallow judgment. *Shakefp.*

Down they fell,  
Driv'n headlong from the *pitch* of heav'n, down  
Into this deep. *Milton's Par. Lost, b. ii.*

Cannons shoot the higher *pitch*.

The lower we let down their breeches.  
Alcibiades was one of the best orators of his age, not-  
withstanding he lived at a time when learning was at the  
highest *pitch*. *Addison's Whig Examiner.*

4. Highest rise.

A beauty waining, and distressed widow,  
Seduc'd the *pitch* and height of all his thoughts  
To base declension and loath'd bigamy. *Shakefp.*

5. State with respect to lowness or height.

From this high *pitch* let us descend  
A lower flight; and speak of things at hand. *Milton.*

By how much from the top of wondrous glory,  
Strongest of mortal men,  
To lowest *pitch* of abject fortune thou art fall'n. *Milton.*

6. Degree; stature.

That infernal monster having cast  
His weary foe into the living well,  
'Gan high advance his broad discoloured breast  
Above his wounded pitch. *Fairy Queen.*

Were the whole frame here,  
It is of such a spacious lofty *pitch*,  
Your roof were not sufficient to contain it. *Shakefp.*

It turn'd itself to Ralpho's shape;  
So like in person, garb and *pitch*,  
'Twas hard t' interpret which was which. *Hudibras.*

7. To overcome in battle, and subdue  
Nations, and bring home spoils, with infinite  
Manlaughter, shall be held the highest *pitch*  
Of human glory. *Milton's Par. Lost, b. xi.*

Our resident Tom  
From Venice is come,  
And hath left the statesman behind him,  
Talks at the same *pitch*,  
Is as wife, is as rich,  
And just where you left him, you find him. *Denham.*

Princes that fear'd him, grieve; concern'd to see  
No *pitch* of glory from the grave is free. *Waller.*

Evangelical innocence, such as the gospel accepts, though  
mingled with several infirmities and defects, yet amounts to  
such a *pitch* of righteousness, as we call sincerity. *South.*

When the sun's heat is thus far advanced, 'tis but just  
come up to the *pitch* of another set of vegetables, and but  
great enough to excite the terrestrial particles, which are more  
ponderous. *Woodward's Natural History.*

**TO PITCH.** *v. a.* [*appiciare*, Italian.]

1. To fix; to plant.

On Dardan plains the Greeks do *pitch*  
Their brave pavilions. *Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida.*

Sharp stakes, plucked out of hedges,  
They *pitched* in the ground. *Shakefp. Henry VI.*

He counsell'd him how to hunt his game,  
What dart to cast, what net, what tole to *pitch*. *Fairfax.*

David prepared a place for the ark of God, and *pitched* for  
it a tent. *1 Chron. xv. 1.*

Mahometes *pitched* his tents in a little meadow.

When the victor  
Had conquered Thebes, he *pitched* upon the plain  
His mighty camp. *Dryden's Knight's Tale.*

To Chaffis' pleasing plains he took his way,  
There *pitch'd* his tents, and there resolv'd to stay. *Dryden.*

The trenches first they pass'd, then took their way  
Where their proud foes in *pit*'d pavilions lay. *Dryden.*

2. To

# PIT

2. To order regularly.

In setting down the form of common prayer, there was  
no need to mention the learning of a fit, or the unfitness of  
an ignorant minister, more than that he, which describeth  
the manner how to *pitch* a field, should speak of moderation  
and sobriety in diet. *Hooker, b. v. f. 31.*

One *pitched* battle would determine the fate of the Spanish  
continent. *Addison on the State of the War.*

3. To throw headlong; to cast forward.

They'll not *pitch* me i' th' mire,  
Unless he bid 'em. *Shakefp. Tempst.*

They would wrestle, and *pitch* the bar for a whole after-  
noon. *Spectator, N° 434.*

4. To smear with *PITCH*. [*picca*, Lat. from the noun.]

The ark *pitch* within and without. *Genesis vi. 14.*

The Trojans mount their ships, born on the waves,  
And the *pitch'd* vessels glide with easy force. *Dryden.*

Some *pitch* the ends of the timber in the walls, to preserve  
them from the mortar. *Moxon's Mechanical Exercises.*

I *pitched* over the convex very thinly, by dropping melted  
*pitch* upon it, and warming it to keep the *pitch* soft, whilst  
I ground it with the concave copper wetted to make it spread  
evenly all over the convex. *Newton's Opticks.*

5. To darken.

The air hath star'd the roses in her cheeks,  
And *pitch'd* the lily tincture of her face. *Shakefp.*

The welkin *pitch'd* with fullen cloud. *Addison.*

6. To pave.

**TO PITCH.** *v. n.*

1. To light; to drop.

When the swarm is settled, take a branch of the tree  
whereon they *pitch*, and wipe the hive clean. *Mortimer.*

2. To fall headlong.

The courser o'er the pommel cast the knight;  
Forward he flew, and *pitching* on his head,  
He quiver'd with his feet, and lay for dead. *Dryden.*

3. To fix choice.

We think 'tis no great matter which,  
They're all alike, yet we shall *pitch*  
On one that fits our purpose. *Hudibras.*

A free agent will *pitch* upon such a part in his choice, with  
knowledge certain. *More's Divine Dialogues.*

The subject I have *pitched* upon may seem improper. *South.*

I *pitched* upon this consideration that parents owe their chil-  
dren, not only material subsistence, but much more spiritual  
contribution to their mind. *Digby on the Soul.*

The covetous man was a good while at a stand; but he  
came however by degrees to *pitch* upon one thing after an-  
other. *L'Estrange's Fables.*

*Pitch* upon the best course of life, and custom will render  
it the most easy. *Tillotson's Sermons.*

I translated Chaucer, and amongst the rest *pitched* on the  
wife of Bath's tale. *Dryden's Fables.*

4. To fix a tent or temporary habitation.

They *pitched* by Emmaus in the plain. *1 Mac. iii. 40.*

**PITCHER.** *n. f.* [*pitcher*, French.]

1. An earthen vessel; a water pot.

With sudden fear her *pitcher* down she threw  
And fled away. *Fairy Queen, b. i.*

*Pitchers* have ears, and I have many servants;  
Besides old Gremio is hearkening. *Shakefp.*

Pyræus was only famous for counterfeiting all base things;  
as earthen *pitchers* and a scullery. *Peacham on Drawing.*

Hylas may drop his *pitcher*, none will cry,  
Not if he drown himself. *Dryden.*

2. An instrument to pierce the ground in which any thing is to  
be fixed.

To the hills poles must be set deep in the ground, with a  
square iron *pitcher* or crow. *Mortimer's Husbandry.*

**PITCHFORK.** *n. f.* [*pitch and fork*.] A fork with which corn  
is thrown upon the waggon.

An old lord in Leicestershire amused himself with mending  
*pitchforks* and spades for his tenants gratis. *Swift.*

**PITCHINESS.** *n. f.* [from *pitchy*.] Blackness; darkness.

**PITCHY.** *adj.* [from *pitch*.]

1. Smeared with *pitch*.

The planks, their *pitchy* coverings wash'd away,  
Now yield; and now a yawning breach display. *Dryden.*

2. Having the qualities of *pitch*.

Native petroleum, found floating upon some springs, is no  
other than this very *pitchy* substance, drawn forth of the strata  
by the water. *Woodward on Fossils.*

3. Black; dark; dismal.

Night is fled,  
Whose *pitchy* mantle over-veil'd the earth. *Shakefp.*

I will fort a *pitchy* day for thee. *Shakefp. Henry VI.*

*Pitchy* and dark the night sometimes appears,  
Fried to our voice, and parent of our fears;  
Our joy and wonder sometimes she excites,  
With stars unnumber'd. *Prior.*

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**PITCOAL.** *n. f.* [*pit and coal*.] Fossile coal.

The best fuel is peat, the next charcoal made of *pitcoal* of  
cinders. *Mortimer's Husbandry.*

**PIT-MAN.** *n. f.* [*pit and man*.] He that in sawing timber works  
below in the pit.

With the pitfaw they enter the one end of the stuff, the  
topman at the top, and the *pitman* under him: the topman  
observing to guide the saw exactly, and the *pitman* drawing it  
with all his strength perpendicularly down. *Moxon.*

**PIT-SAW.** *n. f.* [*pit and saw*.] The large saw used by two  
men, of whom one is in the pit.

The *pitfaw* is not only used by those workmen that saw  
timber and boards, but is also for small matters used by  
joiners. *Moxon's Mechanical Exercises.*

**PITEOUS.** *adj.* [from *pity*.]

1. Sorrowful; mournful; exciting pity.

When they heard that *piteous* strained voice,  
In haste forsook their rural merriment. *Fairy Queen.*

The most arch deed of *piteous* mallice,  
That ever yet this land was guilty of. *Shakefp. Rich. III.*

Which when Deucalion with a *piteous* look  
Beheld, he wept. *Dryden.*

2. Compassionate; tender.

If the series of thy joys  
Permit one thought less cheerful to arise,  
*Piteous* transfer it to the mournful fawn. *Prior.*

She gave him, *piteous* of his case,  
A shaggy tap'try. *Pope's Dunciad.*

3. Wretched; paltry; pitiful.

*Piteous* amends! unless  
Be meant our grand foe. *Milton's Par. Lost.*

**PITEOUSLY.** *adv.* [from *piteous*.] In a piteous manner.

I must talk of murders, rapes and massacres,  
Ruthful to hear, yet *piteously* perform'd. *Shakefp.*

**PITEOUSNESS.** *n. f.* [from *piteous*.] Sorrowfulness; tenderness.

**PITFALL.** *n. f.* [*pit and fall*.] A pit dug and covered, into  
which a passenger falls unexpectedly.

Poor bird! should'st never fear the net nor lime,  
The *pitfall* nor the gin. *Shakefp. Macbeth.*

Thieves dig concealed *pitfalls* in his way. *Sandys.*

These hidden *pitfalls* were set thick at the entrance of the  
bridge, so that throngs of people fell into them. *Addison.*

**PITH.** *n. f.* [*pitte*, Dutch.]

1. The marrow of the plant; the soft part in the middle of the  
wood.

If a cion, fit to be set in the ground, hath the *pith* finely  
taken forth, and not altogether, but some of it left, it will bear  
a fruit with little or no core. *Bacon's Natural History.*

Her solid bones convert to solid wood,  
To *pith* her marrow, and to sap her blood. *Dryden.*

2. Marrow.

As doth the *pith*, which left our bodies slack,  
Strings fast the little bones of neck and back;  
So by the foul doth death string heav'n and earth. *Donne.*

The vertebrae are all perforated in the middle, with a large  
hole for the spinal marrow or *pith* to pass along. *Ray.*

3. Strength; force.

*Pith* in Scotland is still retained as denoting strength, either  
corporeal or intellectual: as, that defies all your *pith*.  
Leave your England,

Guarded with grandfires, babies and old women,  
Or pass'd, or not arriv'd to *pith* and puissance. *Shakefp.*

Since these arms of mine had seven years *pith*. *Shakefp.*

4. Energy; cogency; fulness of sentiment; closeness and vi-  
gour of thought and stile.

5. Weight; moment; principal part.

That's my *pith* of business  
'Twixt you and your poor brother. *Shakefp.*